## REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the subject application. Claims 1-34 are pending in this application.

### Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 15, 16, 27, and 28 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

### 35 U.S.C. § 101

Claims 1-7 and 33-34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101.

With respect to claims 1-2, it was asserted in the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 2 that claims 1-2 "do not define a machine or computer implemented process [see MPEP 2106]. Therefore, the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter." Applicant respectfully disagrees. Claims 1-2 are directed to "A method, implemented by a computing device". As such, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-2 do define a computer implemented process, and are directed to statutory subject matter.

With respect to claims 3-7, Applicant has amended the claims as suggested in the March 18, 2005 Office Action.

With respect to claims 33-34, claim 33 has been amended to clarify that hardware elements are included in the system of claim 33, and the claim is not directed to a computer program per se. Claim 34 depends from claim 33. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claims 33-34 are directed to statutory subject matter.

Applicant respectfully requests that the §101 rejections be withdrawn.


### 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-2 and 8-32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

With respect to claims 1-2, the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 4 stated that "it is not clearly understood what the term 'sending a service request to a device' means". Applicant respectfully submits that sending a service request to a device is clear. For example, the Specification at p. 4, lines 1-14 recites:

> Servicing of a device refers to obtaining information regarding operation of the device (e.g., one or more metrics relating to usage of the device). The exact information obtained can vary by implementation, based on the types of devices being managed and/or the desires of the manufacturer(s) of the devices 102 or managers 104. Examples of such information that can be obtained include a number of pages printed or scanned, an amount of time the device has been powered-on, an amount of ink or toner used, whether a service door has been opened, whether an input tray is currently empty, whether the device is currently functional or an error has occurred in the device, how long a particular user has been logged in to the device, application(s) that have been executing on the device, how long a particular application has been executing (e.g., in total, while a particular user is logged in, etc.), etc. As used herein, servicing of a device and managing of a device are interchangeable.

The Specification goes on to recite, at p. 5, lines 16-24:

> When servicing a device 102, device service module 126 communicates a service request to the service response module 122 of the device being serviced. Service response module 122 gathers the appropriate information, and optionally performs various functions in response to the service request. A particular function to be performed (e.g., re-set a page counter) may be specifically identified in the request, or may be inherent based on the request (e.g., service response module 122 always resets a page counter in

lee&hayes pllc    509-324-9256
14
Application No. 10/056,203
PAGE 15/43 * RCVD AT 6/18/2005 11:27:21 AM [Eastern Daylight Time] * SVR:USPTO-EFXRF-1/1 * DNIS:8729306 * CSID:509 323 8979 * DURATION (mm-ss):11-06

response to a service request). The gathered information is then returned to device service module 126.

In light of these examples from the Specification, Applicant respectfully submits that sending a service request to a device is clear.

With respect to claims 8-21, the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 4 stated that "'desired manager' is indefinite. How a device to be defined as 'desired' (available immediately or high speed)". Applicant respectfully disagrees and asserts that "desired manager" is not indefinite. For example, the Specification at p. 4, line 18 – page 5, line 4 recites (emphasis added):

> Each of the devices 102 is serviced by one or more of the device managers 104. For each device 102, a particular one of the device managers 104 is deemed to be the desired manager for the device 102. Each device 102 is typically serviced by its desired manager 104, but at various intervals will also be serviced by other managers 104. Which other managers and at what intervals this servicing by other managers will be done is based on a trigger condition, as discussed in more detail below. If one of these other managers, in response to the trigger condition being satisfied, services the device at least a threshold amount of time faster than the current desired manager 104 for that device, then that manager becomes the new desired manager for the device. Over time, the mapping of desired managers to devices will have, for most if not all of the devices, the manager (or one of the managers) that can service a device faster than the other managers be the desired manager for that device.

In light of these examples from the Specification, Applicant respectfully submits that "desired manager" is not indefinite.

With respect to claims 22-32, the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 4 stated that "it is not clearly understood what device manager means". Applicant respectfully disagrees and asserts that, in light of the examples from the Specification discussed above, "device manager" is clear. Additionally, further

detail regarding the device manager can be found in Fig. 2 and the accompanying discussion in the Specification.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-2 and 8-32 comply with 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

### 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,515,756 to Mastie et al. (hereinafter "Mastie") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,490,052 to Yanagidaira (hereinafter "Yanagidaira"). Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is not obvious over Mastie in view of Yanagidaira.

Mastie is directed to providing a common repository for print attribute values to be applied to transform processes executing in multiple controllers in a network printing system (see, col. 1, lines 27-29). A print attribute refers to any type of control factor that is used to affect the print transform process which generates an output data stream that controls the printer, including form definitions, page definitions, page segments, overlays, and fonts (see, col. 2, lines 15-41). A printer manager routes print jobs received from clients to one of a plurality of printer controllers (see, col. 4, lines 3-5). The printer controllers are each capable of executing multiple instances of printer daemons that can each transform an input data file to a format that may be processed by the printer (see, col. 4, lines 8-12). When the printer manager receives a print job, the printer manager determines the type of printer daemon to use based on the type of input data file (see, col. 5, lines 50-54). After determining the type of printer daemon,

the printer manager would then select a printer daemon available in one of the controllers (see, col. 5, lines 54-57). After selecting a printer daemon type and particular printer daemon from one of the printer controllers, the printer manager would then determine print attribute values by examining configuration files in the network, and would then invoke the selected printer daemon and transmit the determined print attribute values to the invoked printer daemon (see, col. 5, line 65 – col. 6, line 4).

Yanagidaira is directed to a printer controller installed for a printer which is connected to a network (see, col. 1, lines 7-9). As discussed in the Abstract of Yanagidaira, the printer controller controls the shared printer of a network to which the clients are connected. The clients are provided with browsers. The printer controller operates on the printer server which has a function of sending home page data containing information about the shared printer corresponding to URL from the clients connected to the network. The printer controller sends the home page data containing the information about the shared printer and performs at least one or more of operation monitoring, check and instruction of the shared printer connected to the printer server according to the received URL indicating a request of that.

In contrast, claim 1 recites:

A method, implemented by a computing device, the method comprising:
    sending a service request to a device, wherein the service request is a request for data relating to the operation of the device; and
    determining, based at least in part on an amount of time taken to service the device, whether the computing device is to be identified as typically servicing the device.

Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie in view of Yanagidaira does not disclose or suggest the method of claim 1.

In the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 5, Mastie is cited as teaching the determining of claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that no such determining is disclosed or suggested in Mastie. Mastie discusses that when the printer manager receives a print job, the printer manager determines the type of printer daemon to use, e.g., PS2AFP, D2AFP, TIFF2AFO, etc., based on the type of input data file, e.g., PostScript, ditoff, TIFF, etc. (see, col. 5, lines 50-54). Thus, Mastie discusses determining the type of printer daemon to use based on the type of input data file, not based on an amount of time taken to service a device. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the printer daemon type determination of Mastie does not disclose or suggest any determining based at least in part on an amount of time taken to service the device as recited in claim 1.

Mastie also discusses that after determining the type of printer daemon, the printer manager would then select a printer daemon available in one of the controllers (see, col. 5, lines 54-57). However, there is no mention or discussion in Mastie of this printer daemon selection being based on an amount of time taken to service a device. Without such mention or discussion, Applicant respectfully submits that the selection of a printer daemon cannot disclose or suggest any determining based at least in part on an amount of time taken to service the device as recited in claim 1.

Furthermore, there is no discussion or mention in Mastie of a computing device being identified as typically servicing a device. As discussed above, Mastie discusses determining a type of printer daemon based on the type of input

data file, and selecting a printer daemon available in one of the controllers, but nowhere is there any mention in Mastie of identifying a computing device as typically servicing a device. Without any such discussion or mention, Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie cannot disclose or suggest determining whether the computing device is to be identified as typically servicing the device as recited in claim 1.

With respect to Yanagidaira, Yanagidaira is not cited as curing, and does not cure, these deficiencies of Mastie.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is allowable over Mastie in view of Yanagidaira.

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mastie in view of Yanagidaira and in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,766,348 to Combs et al. (hereinafter "Combs"). Applicant respectfully submits that claim 2 is not obvious over Mastie in view of Yanagidaira in view of Combs.

Combs is directed to a method and system for load-balanced data exchange in distributed network-based resource allocation (see, Title). As discussed in the Abstract of Combs, a distributed resource allocator system comprises a number of identical processes running on one or more computers attached to the communications network. Application programs request allocation of resources from a local distributed resource allocator system process running using a resource allocator applications programming interface. Application programs request allocation of resource from a remote distributed resource allocator system process via a resource allocator access protocol. The distributed resource allocator system is fault-tolerant and provides contention control and load balancing. The resource

allocator system also manages information about the capacities and capabilities of resources connected to the communications network. Application programs can thus be easily written to make use of distributed resources connected to a communications network without having to manage global network information and without needing complex contention control and load balancing subroutines.

Claim 2 depends from claim 1, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 2 is allowable over Mastie in view of Yanagidaira for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1. Combs is not cited as curing, and does not cure, the deficiencies of Mastie in view of Yanagidaira discussed above with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 2 is allowable over Mastie in view of Yanagidaira in view of Combs.

Furthermore, Combs is cited in the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 6 as teaching "wherein the determining comprises the step of the decision threshold (max wait duration, col. 11 lines 35-40)". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Combs does not disclose or suggest checking whether the amount of time taken to service the device is less than a decision threshold.

Combs discusses an "Allocate-Resource" function having a "max wait duration" argument supplied to it (see, col. 11, lines 34-37). The "max wait duration" argument specifies the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated (see, col. 11, lines 38-40). However, nowhere is there any discussion or mention in Combs that this wait duration applies to the amount of time taken to service a device. Rather, the definition of the max wait duration argument in Combs states that this is the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated – it does not make any mention of an actual

amount of time taken to service a device. By defining this duration as the maximum time that the user will wait for the resource to be allocated, it follows that if this maximum time is exceeded the user will not wait for the resource to be allocated. Thus, using such a maximum time would result in no servicing of a device when the maximum time is exceeded, so there would be no amount of time taken to service the device that could be checked. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Combs cannot disclose or suggest checking whether the amount of time taken to service the device is less than a decision threshold as recited in claim 2.

With respect to Mastie and Yanagidaira, Mastie and Yanagidaira are not cited as curing, and do not cure, these deficiencies of Combs.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 2 is allowable over Mastie in view of Yanagidaira in view of Combs.

Claims 3, 5-7, and 33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mastie. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 3, 5-7, and 33 are not obvious over Mastie.

With respect to claim 3, claim 3 recites:

> A computer implemented method comprising:
> checking an amount of time taken by a manager device to service another device; and
> determining, based at least in part on the amount of time, whether the manager device is a desired manager of the other device.

Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie does not disclose or suggest the method of claim 3.

Applicant respectfully submits that, analogous to the discussion above regarding claim 1, Mastie does not disclose any determining based on an amount

lee@hayes pllc 509-324-9256
21
Application No. 10/056,203
PAGE 22/43 * RCVD AT 6/18/2005 11:27:21 AM [Eastern Daylight Time] * SVR:USPTO-EFXRF-1/1 * DNIS:8729306 * CSID:509 323 8979 * DURATION (mm-ss):11-06

of time taken by a manager device to service another device. As discussed above, Mastie discusses determining the type of printer daemon to use based on the type of input data file, not based on an amount of time taken to service a device. Also as discussed above, Mastie discusses that after determining the type of printer daemon, the printer manager would then select a printer daemon available in one of the controllers, but there is no mention or discussion in Mastie of this printer daemon selection being based on an amount of time taken to service a device.

Furthermore, Applicant respectfully submits that nowhere in Mastie is there any discussion or mention of a desired manager, much less of determining, based at least in part on the amount of time, whether the manager device is a desired manager of the other device as recited in claim 3. As discussed above, Mastie discusses the printer manager determining the type of printer daemon to use based on the type of input data file, and also discusses that after determining the type of printer daemon, the printer manager would then select a printer daemon available in one of the controllers. But nowhere in Mastie is there any discussion or mention of this printer manager being a desired manager of another device, much less of determining, based at least in part on the amount of time taken by the printer manager to service another device, whether the printer manager is a desired manager of the other device.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 3 is allowable over Mastie.

With respect to claims 5-7, given that claims 5-7 depend from claim 3, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 5-7 are likewise allowable over Mastie for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 3.

With respect to claim 33, Applicant respectfully submits that, analogous to the discussion above regarding claim 3, Mastie does not disclose or suggest a hardware selection module coupled to access the device service table and configured to check an amount of time taken by a manager device to service another device, and determine, based at least in part on the amount of time, whether the manager device is a desired manager of the other device as recited in claim 33. For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 33 is allowable over Mastie.

Claims 8-14 and 17-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,682,304 to Tierney (hereinafter "Tierney") in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 8-14 and 17-21 are not obvious over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

Tierney is directed to an interface for controlling asynchronous communication between a digital computer and an input/output device such as a high-speed keyboard-equipped graphics terminal (see, col. 1, lines 14-18). As discussed in the Abstract of Tierney, the interface includes a microprocessor and a memory addressable thereby. The microprocessor controls data transfer from the host computer into an output buffer maintained within the memory and controls subsequent data transfer from the output buffer to an output device, independently of the operation of the host computer. Data received from the host computer is stored directly into an appropriate output buffer storage location without any time-consuming reading and writing of the data by the microprocessor. This is accomplished by providing a hardware register for storing data received from the

host computer. At the appropriate time data transfer from the microprocessor to the memory is disabled, and data transfer from the register to the memory is enabled. Data is thus rapidly transferred from the register directly into the memory location addressed by the microprocessor.

With respect to claim 8, claim 8 recites:

> One or more computer readable media having stored thereon a plurality of instructions that, when executed by one or more processors of a device manager, causes the one or more processors to perform acts comprising:
> identifying a device to be serviced;
> checking whether the device manager is a desired manager for the device;
> if the device manager is the desired manager for the device, then servicing the device; and
> if the device manager is not the desired manager for the device, then checking whether a trigger condition is satisfied and servicing the device if the trigger condition is satisfied.

Applicant respectfully submits that no such computer readable media is disclosed or suggested by Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

In the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 9, Mastie is cited as teaching the checking of claim 8. Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie does not disclose or suggest checking whether the device manager is a desired manager for the device as recited in claim 8.

Applicant respectfully submits that nowhere in Mastie is there any discussion or mention of a desired manager, much less of checking whether the device manager is a desired manager for an identified device as recited in claim 8. As discussed above, Mastie discusses the printer manager determining the type of printer daemon to use based on the type of input data file, and also discusses that after determining the type of printer daemon, the printer manager would then

select a printer daemon available in one of the controllers. But nowhere in Mastie is there any discussion or mention of this printer manager being a desired manager of another device, much less of checking whether the device manager is a desired manager for an identified device.

Furthermore, Applicant respectfully submits that there is no disclosure or suggestion in Mastie of following two different courses of action based on whether the device manager is the desired manager for the device. As recited in claim 8, these two courses of action are: (1) servicing the device (if the device manager is the desired manager for the device); and (2) checking whether a trigger condition is satisfied and servicing the device if the trigger condition is satisfied (if the device manager is not the desired manager for the device). Applicant respectfully submits that nowhere in Mastie is there any discussion or suggestion of such two different courses of action based on whether the device manager is the desired manager for the device as recited in claim 8.

With respect to Tierney and Combs, Tierney and Combs are not cited as curing, and do not cure, these deficiencies of Mastie.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 8 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 9, claim 9 depends from claim 8, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 9 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 8. Furthermore, Tierney is cited in the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 10 as teaching "wherein identifying the device to be serviced comprises selecting the device from a table accessible to the device manager (table, col. 16 lines 9-

15)". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Tierney does not disclose or suggest wherein identifying the device to be serviced comprises selecting the device from a table accessible to the device manager.

The cited portion of Tierney reads:

> RAM 26 contains tables of address which point to the next available sequential storage locations in each of OUTBUFs 28, the location of the "oldest" data character in each of OUTBUFs 28 which has not yet been outputted to the associated output device, and corresponding pointers to each of INBUFs 48 . . . .

An OUTBUF is a separate temporary, cyclical, output storage buffer maintained in RAM for each of the four output channels (see, col. 5, lines 21-23). OUTBUFs each include 2,048 sequentially addressable one-byte storage locations used in pairs to store a data character and an "attribute code" which is utilized to control some aspects of the manner in which the data character is transmitted to the output device (see, col. 5, lines 25-31). An INBUF is a similar separate, cyclical, input storage buffer maintained in RAM for each input channel (see, col. 5, lines 23-25).

Applicant respectfully submits that there is no disclosure or suggestion in Tierney of the OUTBUFs or INBUFs being a table from which a device to be serviced is selected. The OUTBUFs are output storage buffers, while the INBUFs are input storage buffers. Applicant respectfully submits that the mere disclosure of output and input storage buffers does not disclose or suggest a table from which a device to be serviced is selected, much less wherein identifying the device to be serviced comprises selecting the device from a table accessible to the device manager as recited in claim 9.

With respect to Mastie and Combs, Mastie and Combs are not cited as curing, and do not cure, these deficiencies of Tierney.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 9 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 10, claim 10 depends from claim 8, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 10 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 8. Furthermore, Tierney is cited in the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 11 as teaching "wherein identifying the device to be serviced comprises receiving an indication (point to next, col. 16 lines 9-15) of the device from a central database". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Tierney does not disclose or suggest wherein identifying the device to be serviced comprises receiving an indication of the device from a central database.

As discussed above with respect to claim 9, the cited portion of Tierney discusses input storage buffers and output storage buffers. Applicant respectfully submits that the mere disclosure of output and input storage buffers does not disclose or suggest a central database from which an indication of the device to be serviced is received as recited in claim 9.

With respect to Mastie and Combs, Mastie and Combs are not cited as curing, and do not cure, these deficiencies of Tierney.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 10 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 11, claim 11 depends from claim 8, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 11 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 8. Furthermore, Tierney is cited in the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p.

11 as teaching "wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts comprising updating a last service time for the device (the oldest .... Devices, col. 16 lines 10-15)". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Tierney does not disclose or suggest wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts comprising updating a last service time for the device.

As discussed above with respect to claim 9, the cited portion of Tierney discusses input storage buffers and output storage buffers. As discussed above, the cited portion also discloses that tables of addresses point to the location of the "oldest" data character in each of OUTBUFs which has not yet been outputted to the associated device. However, Applicant respectfully submits that the mere disclosure of addresses that point to the oldest data character that has not yet been outputted do not disclose or suggest updating a last service time for the device as recited in claim 11. The addresses in the cited portion of Tierney identify the oldest data character, not a last service time. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Tierney does not disclose or suggest wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts comprising updating a last service time for the device as recited in claim 11.

With respect to Mastie and Combs, Mastie and Combs are not cited as curing, and do not cure, these deficiencies of Tierney.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 11 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 12, claim 12 depends from claim 8, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 12 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and

further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 8.

Furthermore, Combs is cited in the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 11 as teaching "checking whether a time taken by the device manager to service the device is less than a decision threshold (Combs; max wait duration, col. 11 lines 35-40)". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Combs does not disclose or suggest checking whether a time taken by the device manager to service the device is less than a decision threshold.

As discussed above with respect to claim 2, Combs discusses an "Allocate-Resource" function having a "max wait duration" argument that specifies the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated (see, col. 11, lines 38-40). However, nowhere is there any discussion or mention in Combs that this wait duration applies to the amount of time taken to service a device. Rather, the definition of the max wait duration argument in Combs states that this is the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated – it does not make any mention of an actual amount of time taken to service a device. By defining this duration as the maximum time that the user will wait for the resource to be allocated, it follows that if this maximum time is exceeded the user will not wait for the resource to be allocated. Thus, using such a maximum time would result in no servicing of a device when the maximum time is exceeded, so there would be no amount of time taken to service the device that could be checked. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Combs cannot disclose or suggest checking whether a time taken by the device manager to service the device is less than a decision threshold as recited in claim 12.

lee@hayes plc    509-324-9256                    29                    Application No. 10/056,203

PAGE 30/43 * RCVD AT 6/18/2005 11:27:21 AM [Eastern Daylight Time] * SVR:USPTO-EFXRF-1/1 * DNIS:8729306 * CSID:509 323 8979 * DURATION (mm-ss):11-06

With respect to Mastie and Tierney, Mastie and Tierney are not cited as curing, and do not cure, these deficiencies of Combs.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 12 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 13, claim 13 depends from claim 12, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 13 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 12. Furthermore, analogous to the discussion above regarding claim 9, Applicant respectfully submits that Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs does not disclose or suggest wherein identifying the device manager as the desired manager for the device comprises identifying the device manager in a table entry corresponding to the device as recited in claim 13. For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 13 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 14, claim 14 depends from claim 12, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 14 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 12. Furthermore, Combs is cited in the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 12 as teaching "wherein the decision threshold (max wait duration, col. 11 lines 35-40) is equal to the amount of time taken by the last desired manager of the device to service the device". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Combs does not disclose or suggest wherein the decision threshold is equal to the amount of time taken by the last desired manager of the device to service the device.

As discussed above with respect to claim 2, Combs discusses an "Allocate-Resource" function having a "max wait duration" argument supplied to it (see, col. 11, lines 34-37). The "max wait duration" argument specifies the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated (see, col. 11, lines 38-40). Applicant respectfully submits that there is no discussion or mention in Combs of how this max wait duration is generated, much less that this max wait duration is equal to the amount of time taken by the last desired manager of the device to service the device. Without any such discussion or mention, Applicant respectfully submits that Combs cannot disclose or suggest wherein the decision threshold is equal to the amount of time taken by the last desired manager of the device to service the device as recited in claim 14.

With respect to Mastie and Tierney, Mastie and Tierney are not cited as curing, and do not cure, these deficiencies of Combs.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 14 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

With respect to claims 17 and 18, claims 17 and 18 depend from claim 8, and Applicant respectfully submits that claims 17 and 18 are allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 8.

Application No. 10/056,203

With respect to claim 19, given that claim 19 depends from claim 8, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 19 is likewise allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 8. Furthermore, Mastie in view of Combs is cited in the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 12 as teaching claim 19. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Claim 19 recites:

> One or more computer readable media as recited in claim 8, wherein checking whether the trigger condition is satisfied comprises:
> generating a random value;
> determining whether the random value is less than a particular value; and
> determining that the trigger condition is satisfied if the random value is less than the particular value.

Applicant respectfully submits that no such generating and determining is disclosed or suggested in Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

Applicant respectfully submits that there is no discussion or mention in Tierney or Mastie or Combs of generating a random value and determining that the trigger condition is satisfied if the random value is less than the particular value as recited in claim 19. Simply disclosing a max wait duration argument in Combs that specifies the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated does not provide any disclosure or suggestion of generating a random value, much less of determining that the trigger condition is satisfied if the random value is less than the particular value as recited in claim 19.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 19 is allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs.

With respect to claims 20 and 21, claims 20 and 21 depend from claim 8, and Applicant respectfully submits that claims 20 and 21 are allowable over Tierney in view of Mastie and further in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 8.

Claims 4, 22, 24-26, 29-32, and 34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mastie in view of Combs. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 4, 22, 24-26, 29-32, and 34 are not obvious over Mastie in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 4, claim 4 depends from claim 3, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 4 is allowable over Mastie for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 3. Combs is not cited as curing, and does not cure, the deficiencies of Mastie discussed above with respect to claim 3. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 4 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs.

Furthermore, Combs is cited in the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 13 as teaching "wherein the determining comprises the step of the decision threshold (max wait duration, col. 11 lines 35-40)". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Combs does not disclose or suggest checking whether the amount of time taken by a manager device to service another device is less than a decision threshold.

As discussed above with respect to claim 2, Combs discusses an "Allocate-Resource" function having a "max wait duration" argument that specifies the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated (see, col. 11, lines 38-40). However, nowhere is there any discussion or mention in Combs

that this wait duration applies to the amount of time taken to service a device. Rather, the definition of the max wait duration argument in Combs states that this is the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated – it does not make any mention of an actual amount of time taken to service a device. By defining this duration as the maximum time that the user will wait for the resource to be allocated, it follows that if this maximum time is exceeded the user will not wait for the resource to be allocated. Thus, using such a maximum time would result in no servicing of a device when the maximum time is exceeded, so there would be no amount of time taken to service the device that could be checked. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Combs cannot disclose or suggest checking whether the amount of time taken by a manager device to service another device is less than a decision threshold as recited in claim 4.

With respect to Mastie, Mastie is not cited as curing, and does not cure, these deficiencies of Combs.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 4 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 22, claim 22 recites:

> One or more computer readable media having stored thereon a plurality of instructions that, when executed by one or more processors of a computing device, causes the one or more processors to perform acts comprising:
> receiving, from a device manager, a request for an identification of one or more devices to be serviced by the device manager;
> identifying, to the device manager, one or more devices for which the device manager is the desired manager;
> for a plurality of additional devices for which the device manager is not the desired manager, checking whether a trigger condition is satisfied; and

for each device for which the device manager is not the desired manager and for which the trigger condition is satisfied, identifying the device to the device manager.

Applicant respectfully submits that no such computer readable media is disclosed or suggested by Mastie in view of Combs.

In the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 14, the printer manager accessing configuration file to identify the print attributes of Mastie is cited as teaching the receiving of claim 22. Applicant respectfully disagrees and submits that Mastie does not disclose or suggest receiving, from a device manager, a request for an identification of one or more devices to be serviced by the device manager as recited in claim 22. As discussed above, the print attributes of Mastie are determined by examining configuration files in a network (see, col. 5, line 67 – col. 6, line 1). These print attributes include form definitions, page definitions, page segments, overlays, and fonts (see, col. 2, lines 15-41). Nowhere in this discussion of examining configuration files to determine print attributes is there any discussion or mention of receiving a request for an identification of one or more devices to be serviced by the device manager, much less of receiving the request from the device manager. Without any such discussion or mention, Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie cannot disclose or suggest receiving, from a device manager, a request for an identification of one or more devices to be serviced by the device manager as recited in claim 22.

Furthermore, in the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 14, Mastie is cited as teaching the identifying of claim 22. Applicant respectfully disagrees and submits that Mastie does not disclose or suggest identifying, to the device manager, one or more devices for which the device manager is the desired manager as recited in claim 22. Applicant respectfully submits that nowhere in

Mastie is there any discussion or mention of a desired manager, much less of identifying, to the device manager, one or more devices for which the device manager is the desired manager as recited in claim 22. As discussed above, Mastie discusses the printer manager determining the type of printer daemon to use based on the type of input data file, and also discusses that after determining the type of printer daemon, the printer manager would then select a printer daemon available in one of the controllers. But nowhere in Mastie is there any discussion or mention of this printer manager being a desired manager of one or more other devices, much less of identifying, to the printer manager, one or more devices for which the printer manager is the desired manager.

With respect to Combs, Combs is not cited as curing, and does not cure, these deficiencies of Mastie.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 22 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 24, claim 24 depends from claim 22, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 24 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 22. Furthermore, Combs is cited in the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 15 as teaching "wherein checking whether a time taken by the device manager to service the device is less than a decision threshold (Combs; max wait duration, col. 11 lines 35-40)". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Combs does not disclose or suggest checking whether the amount of time taken by the device manager to service the device is less than a decision threshold.

As discussed above with respect to claim 2, Combs discusses an "Allocate-Resource" function having a "max wait duration" argument that specifies the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated (see, col. 11, lines 38-40). However, nowhere is there any discussion or mention in Combs that this wait duration applies to the amount of time taken to service a device. Rather, the definition of the max wait duration argument in Combs states that this is the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated – it does not make any mention of an actual amount of time taken to service a device. By defining this duration as the maximum time that the user will wait for the resource to be allocated, it follows that if this maximum time is exceeded the user will not wait for the resource to be allocated. Thus, using such a maximum time would result in no servicing of a device when the maximum time is exceeded, so there would be no amount of time taken to service the device that could be checked. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Combs cannot disclose or suggest checking whether the amount of time taken by the device manager to service the device is less than a decision threshold as recited in claim 24.

With respect to Mastie, Mastie is not cited as curing, and does not cure, these deficiencies of Combs.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 24 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 25, given that claim 25 depends from claim 24, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 25 is likewise allowable over Mastie in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 24.

With respect to claim 26, given that claim 26 depends from claim 24, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 26 is likewise allowable over Mastie in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 24. Furthermore, Combs is cited in the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 15 as teaching "wherein the decision threshold (max wait duration, col. 11 lines 35-40) is equal to the amount of time taken by the last desired manager of the device to service the device". Applicant respectfully disagrees, and asserts that Combs does not disclose or suggest wherein the decision threshold is equal to the amount of time taken by the desired manager of the device to service the device.

As discussed above with respect to claim 2, Combs discusses an "Allocate-Resource" function having a "max wait duration" argument supplied to it (see, col. 11, lines 34-37). The "max wait duration" argument specifies the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated (see, col. 11, lines 38-40). Applicant respectfully submits that there is no discussion or mention in Combs of how this max wait duration is generated, much less that this max wait duration is equal to the amount of time taken by a desired manager of a device to service the device. Without any such discussion or mention, Applicant respectfully submits that Combs cannot disclose or suggest wherein the decision threshold is equal to the amount of time taken by the desired manager of the device to service the device as recited in claim 26.

With respect to Mastie, Mastie is not cited as curing, and does not cure, these deficiencies of Combs.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 26 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 29, given that claim 29 depends from claim 22, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 29 is likewise allowable over Mastie in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 22.

With respect to claim 30, given that claim 30 depends from claim 22, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 30 is likewise allowable over Mastie in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 22. Furthermore, Mastie in view of Combs is cited in the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 16 as teaching claim 30. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Claim 30 recites:

> One or more computer readable media as recited in claim 22, wherein checking whether the trigger condition is satisfied comprises:
> generating a random value;
> determining whether the random value is less than a particular value;
> determining that the trigger condition is satisfied if the random value is less than the particular value.

Applicant respectfully submits that no such generating and determining is disclosed or suggested in Mastie in view of Combs.

Applicant respectfully submits that there is no discussion or mention in Mastie or Combs of generating <u>a random value</u> and determining that the trigger condition is satisfied if the random value is less than the particular value as recited in claim 30. Simply disclosing a max wait duration argument in Combs that specifies the maximum time which the user will wait for the resource to be allocated does not provide any disclosure or suggestion of generating a random value, much less of determining that the trigger condition is satisfied if the random value is less than the particular value as recited in claim 30.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 30 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 31, given that claim 31 depends from claim 22, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 31 is likewise allowable over Mastie in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 22. Furthermore, claim 31 recites:

> One or more computer readable media as recited in claim 22, wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts comprising altering the trigger condition over time.

Applicant respectfully submits that no such altering is disclosed or suggest in Mastie in view of Combs.

In the March 18, 2005 Office Action at p. 16, Mastie in view of Combs is cited as teaching claim 31. However, it is not clear in this rejection of claim 31 where altering the trigger condition over time is allegedly disclosed in Mastie or Combs. Applicant respectfully submits that there is no disclosure or even mention in the discussion of the max wait duration argument of Combs of altering the max wait duration over time. Applicant further respectfully submits that there is no discussion or mention elsewhere in Mastie or Combs of altering a trigger condition over time. Without any such discussion or mention, Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie in view of Combs cannot disclose or suggest altering the trigger condition over time as recited in claim 31.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 31 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs.

With respect to claim 32, given that claim 32 depends from claim 22, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 32 is likewise allowable over Mastie in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 22.

With respect to claim 34, claim 34 depends from claim 33, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 34 is allowable over Mastie for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 33. Combs is not cited as curing, and does not cure, the deficiencies of Mastie discussed above with respect to claim 33. Furthermore, analogous to the discussion above regarding claim 4, Applicant respectfully submits that Mastie in view of Combs does not disclose or suggest checking whether the amount of time taken by a manager device to service another device is less than a decision threshold as recited in claim 34. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 34 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs.

Claim 23 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mastie in view of Combs and in view of Yanagidaira. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 23 is not obvious over Mastie in view of Combs and in view of Yanagidaira.

Claim 23 depends from claim 22, and Applicant respectfully submits that claim 23 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 22. Yanagidaira is not cited as curing, and does not cure, the deficiencies of Mastie in view of Combs discussed above with respect to claim 22. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 23 is allowable over Mastie in view of Combs and in view of Yanagidaira.

Applicant respectfully requests that the §103 rejections be withdrawn.

## Conclusion

Claims 1-34 are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and issuance of the subject application. Should any matter in this case remain unresolved, the undersigned attorney respectfully requests a telephone conference with the Examiner to resolve any such outstanding matter.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: 6/18/05

By: _____

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